

CHARIVARIA.

It is now denied that a new House of Lords is to be built. To suit modern requirements it was to have been capable of indefinite expansion, the scheme being similar to that used by the makers of a certain well-known expanding book-case.

In the natural confusion of ideas which resulted from strong party feeling, the title "Dictator" (the sole property of Mr. JOHN REDMOND) was flung in the face of Mr. H. H. ASQUITH. The PREMIER wishes it to be understood that the letters "H. H." do not stand for "His Highness."

It seems regrettable that, owing to a certain pearl of Radical speech not having reached the ears of the SPEAKER during Tuesday's scene, the House is still without a ruling as to whether the expression "Insolent Swine" is in order. Members must really speak more distinctly.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE'S cautionary speech was received at first in Germany with the question: "For whom is the Minister's warning intended?" A couple or so of guesses and they got the answer right.

One would have thought that, when M. BEAUMONT reached Brooklands from Brighton, his troubles would have been at an end. But no. "Several ladies," a reporter tells us, "tried to kiss the intrepid airman."

Not the least remarkable result of the great air race was the fact that in their descriptions of the event all the rival newspapers had to acknowledge the existence of our bright little contemporary, *The Daily Mail*.

"In consequence of the continued hot weather the present run of *The Girl who couldn't lie* will end at the Criterion to-night." It seems a pity that the telling of the truth should prove to be such an exertion.

Now that the Tubes have established themselves as the coolest places in the hot weather, one at least of these lines, we hear, is about to run amusement trains, with a view to enable persons to spend the whole day in comfort. Light refreshments will be obtainable

and a music-hall performance—including a wonderful acrobatic display by artistes on the straps—will also be provided.

An orchestral society, consisting of medical men, has been founded in Berlin. Many doctors, it is not generally realised, are skilful players on the bronchial catarrh.

We note the appearance of "Everybody's Pocket Guide." This should be particularly useful to those ladies who have a difficulty in finding their pockets.

The *Observer* declares that Mr. ROBERT B. PORTER'S book on the Republican States of South America has for its object "the promotion of

novelty which it is supposed to be. He declares that one may be seen in a picture which he owns, painted fifty years ago. On the other hand this may merely prove that the post-impressionists are not the novelty which they are supposed to be.

The suggestion made at the meeting of the Royal Sanitary Congress that an admirable cure for ill-health would be a weekly spell of twenty-four hours in bed leads an Irishman to suggest that this is not enough. Twenty-four hours in bed twice a day is the prescription he would like to see.

A number of Persian actors are now appearing at the Hippodrome. In the words of the ex-SHAH, "Now is the time to act!"

Hair made from silk is the latest invention of fashion, *The Hairdressers' Weekly Journal* informs us. Wool, of course, has been worn by many persons for years past.



"WOT'S UP, MATE?"

"I WENT IN BATHING AND 'AD MY CLOTHES PINCHED; BUT LUCKILY I'D KEPT MY 'AT ON, AND MY RETURN TICKET WAS IN THE 'AT-BAND."

loser relations between Great Britain and the ten nations," and we are left wondering whether the relations should be "closer" or "looser."

One of the founders of the "Millionaires' Theatre," in New York, states that the plutocrats are prepared to keep the theatre going even at a loss in order to provide unsensational drama. The announcement has created a sensation.

The *Morning Post*, under its new editor, is evidently going in for a new departure, namely a matrimonial agency. The following advertisement appeared in a recent issue of our go-ahead contemporary:—"Lady recommends Excellent Vegetarian Cook-Housekeeper wanting small family. . ."

A gentleman writes to *The Mail* to point out that a blue rose is not the

BALLADE OF FANCY FAIR.

In April hours
Its booths we knew
Uplift 'mid flowers
Untouched of rue.
'Twas then we drew
The magic ware
From tents of blue
At Fancy Fair!

Its kindly bowers
For lovers due,
From chilly showers
They kept us two;

Lest wetted through,
We'd ceased to care
For Cupid's brew
And Fancy Fair!

Still hath it dower
When life's askew,
A gentle power,
A kind ado,
For me and you
Who still may share
The rainbow view
Of Fancy Fair!

ENVOY.

Princess, anew
We'll wander there,
Where dreams are true
At Fancy Fair!

"For Sale.—Large Scales, Mandoline, and some Bricks."—*Evening Mail*.

A very happy combination; but the bricks should go to the audience.

HOW I GOT THERE.

[The following lines, which betray a mood of confident assurance not justified by the subsequent course of events, are alleged to have been picked up in the neighbourhood of *The Pall Mall Gazette*, and would seem to have been composed on behalf of one of the prospective Peers on the day after the HALSBURY banquet.]

THOUGH Virtue's record, by itself,
Should have ensured a rich requital
Even without the ready pelf
That oils the *entrée* to a title;
Yet not to me alone the credit's due,
No, nor to ASQUITH, on whose soul it grated,
Being Prime Minister, to work a *coup*
That One Above dictated.

Nor he, by whose permissive nod
We live—an awful obligation—
Not REDMOND (J.), that puissant god,
Could have accomplished this creation;
'Tis not to him that (under Heaven) we owe
This largesse of hereditary lustres,
It is to Messrs. F. E. SMITH & Co.,
Those very useful thrusters!

The help of HALSBURY, too, I hymn;
No praise that I can here express 'll
Convey the valour, calm and grim,
That earned a dinner at the Cecil;
Where, having boomed his high old Tory pride,
They utilized that honorific function
To drench their chiefs (the same that he'd defied)
With streams of loyal unction.

I cannot, having missed the meal,
Judge if the roisterers showed a fair case
For thus protesting love and zeal
While kicking leaders down the staircase;
But this is sure—that, as I lightly go
To join the new creation's noble musters,
I raise my coronet to SMITH & Co.,
Those very perfect thrusters.

O. S.

MOTOR AND SUPER-MOTOR.

[We are informed that motor-cars, after undergoing a slight modification, are now being used as the propelling power in house-boats.]

A HEROIC rescue was effected yesterday at John-o'-Groats. While signals were being sent to a ship in distress a hundred miles away the wireless telegraph broke down. A passing motorist with rare presence of mind hitched the band of the apparatus to the wheel of his car, re-started it, and a lifeboat was instantly communicated with. He declined to give his name or receive any thanks, stating that he had so often caused the death of innocent people that he owed some reparation.

In the smartest circles Spring-cleaning will be done next season by the help of the stud of motor-cars, moored out on the lawn, to drive the vacuum cleaners.

The omni-motor is regarded as the greatest triumph of the age. By touching different levers—to learn the names of which demands a long apprenticeship—the operator can make it cut hair, boil water, work a pianola, mangle shirts, turn a cinematograph, clean the chimneys, beat eggs or mow and roll a tennis lawn. In case of invasion it can be sunk and form a useful submarine, or have its tyres fully inflated and serve as a capable military airship.

"The programme was as follows:—Quartette, 'O hurl thee my baby.'—*Natal Witness*.
Far better use the fire-escape.

CATCHING HER EYE.

We had come to an end of dinner quite naturally at our end of the table. It had been a fearfully long one. The strain of keeping up an animated conversation for two solid hours was beginning to tell on my host, and his eyes brightened as he glanced at his wife at the other end of the table. She would get up in a minute, and he would be able to re-tell the story of how his sherry had been smuggled from the Imperial cellars at St. Petersburg—probably to more grateful listeners. Meanwhile, very light small-talk was what was wanted.

"When I was in Spain," he began, and then remembered the anecdote was too long.

"I must tell you an amusing story of how I tried to buy a blouse at the sales the other day," I said, seeing his difficulty, and half-way through bungled the point through over-curtailing it. Stories were no good. We must restrict ourselves to remarks.

"Are you going to Cowes?" I said recklessly, and caught my *vis-à-vis* looking at me curiously. Since the savoury she had confined herself to a sympathetic smile, and now affected mild amusement at the absurdity of chatter after her half-hour's earnest discussion on the Insurance Bill. But something had to be done.

"N-n-no, that is to say, yes," he replied quickly, "though I confess racing does not attract me. But I have a collection of model yachts. Dear me, yes. I must show it you. I-I rather want to see it——" He looked frowningly at his wife. He mustn't begin on any of his collections. The chief points of a hobby can't be run through between the picking up of gloves and the opening of a door. As far as I could make out, she was discussing the successful lighting of reception rooms, illustrated by diagrams on the back of her menu. A little sigh of disappointment escaped him, and in despair he began to offer me more grapes. "No, really," I said very firmly, and nearly added, "I never eat fruit at breakfast." Was it yesterday or a week ago that we had sat down to dine? There was a growing restlessness on his part after this, but pushing his chair back suddenly and creaking it—his eyes fixed on his wife with what would have been to me mesmeric force—had no effect whatever. Then he played a strong card. "My wife always says," he remarked very loudly and deliberately—"my wife always says—I was telling them, my dear, you always say that——"

It failed to reach her. He creaked again, this time almost ostentatiously, and even gave an extra flourish of his pocket-handkerchief in the unnecessary process of not blowing his nose. I felt sorry for him. She appeared to be short-sighted as well as deaf. My neighbour on the other side turned to me.

"Tell me some more of your experiences," he said. "I liked the story of your dancing with a waiter by mistake. I am much interested in sociology."

An idea came to me.

"I was bathing once," I said in my clearest and most bell-like tones—"it was in Devonshire and we were a large mixed party—and I had just got a new bathing-dress. It was a very pretty one, but I had never worn it before, and——"

I was aware of an eye flashing at me from the bottom of the table.

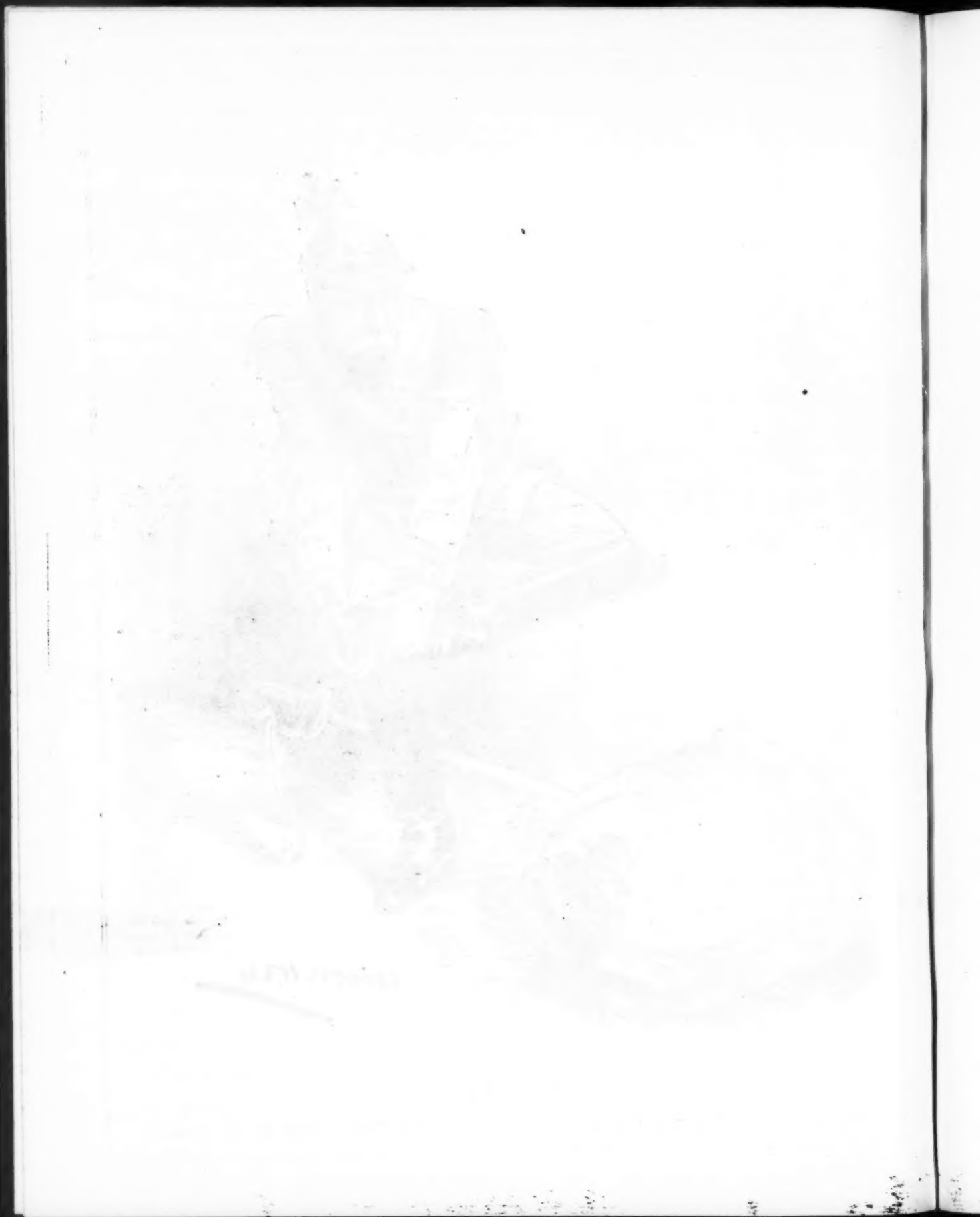
"Shall we leave them to smoke?" my hostess said sweetly as we all rose.

"A delightfully cool breeze was blowing . . . Several ladies, both Indian and European, were among the guests."—*Said Gazette*.
It sounds more like a hurricane.



SOLID.

GERMANY. "DONNERWETTER! IT'S ROCK. I THOUGHT IT WAS GOING TO BE PAPER."





AN ABSORBING OCCUPATION.

Squire's Wife. "WHY, JACKY, I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU FOR TWO OR THREE WEEKS. WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING ALL THE TIME?"
Jacky (lodge-keeper's child). "'AVING DRINKS O' WATER."

DUSK OUT-OF-DOORS.

(A LITTLE REVERIE.)

HAS it ever struck you, gentle reader,
 When the summer nights are warm
 (Deck-chairs underneath the dark old cedar,
 Moths about, and bats in form),
 What a boon it means to golden fancies,
 Faith and love and fond regret?
 How (conversely) trade in true romances
 Suffers if the season's wet?

Take myself: I stand, with my cigar lit,
 Near the rhododendron clumps;
 Olorous is the earth, the heaven's starlit,
 I am wearing evening pumps;
 Dreams of youth arise: I almost pardon
 Belle, the fair and fickle flirt;
 Should I even be here in the garden
 If the gravel walks were dirt?

No, I should be playing cards or (may be)
 Billiards at the "Rose and Crown"—
 "Very sorry, James, I've missed a baby
 Cannon and I've sent you down;
 Not my fault I couldn't find the jigger"—
 Now I stand stock-still and think

How superbly fair her angel figure
 Sometimes looked in salmon-pink.

I'm of course alone; but look at others:
 Down beside the gooseberry beds
 There are Mr. Jones and Miss Carruthers
 Putting very close their heads;
 Sweet young things; but, gracious! if the weather
 Hadn't been so fine this year,
 Could they have been thrown so oft together?
 No, it would have failed, I fear.

That's what does it: moonlight and the murmur
 Made by sympathetic trees;
 Nothing can compare for binding firmer
 Amatory knots with these:
 Comes a kind of feyness after dinner
 When Selene lords the night
 (I remember, I proposed at Pinner,
 Years ago, on such a night).

Nay, and even now, I am not certain;
 In this atmosphere of balm,
 Ringed about by night's bejewelled curtain,
 Listening to the streamlet's psalm,
 Possibly I too might come out stronger,
 Feel again love's passion-swirl,
 If the fine spell lasts a little longer,
 If I meet some lovely girl.

EVOE.

THE HOUSE WARMING.

IV.—A WORD IN SEASON.

"ARCHIE," said Blair, "what's that big empty room above the billiard-room for?"

"That," said Archie, "is where we hide the corpses of our guests. I sleep with the key under my pillow."

"This is rather sudden," said Simpson. "I'm not at all sure that I should have come if I had known that."

"Don't frighten them, dear; tell them the truth."

"Well, the truth is," said Archie, "that there was some idea of a little play-acting there occasionally. Hence the curtain-rod, the emergency exit and other devices."

"Then why haven't we done any? We came down here to open your house for you, and then you go and lock up the most important room of all, and sleep with the key under your pillow."

"It's too hot. But we'll do a little charade to-night if you like—just to air the place."

"Hooray," said Myra, "I know a lovely word."

Myra's little word was in two syllables and required three performers. Archie and I were kindly included in her company. Simpson threatened to follow with something immense and archaic, and Thomas also had something rather good up his sleeve, but I am not going to bother you with these. One word will be enough for you.

First Scene.

"Oh, good morning," said Myra. She had added a hat and a sunshade to her evening frock, and was supported by me in a gentlemen's lounge coat and boater for Henley wear.

"Good morning, Mum," said Archie, hitching up his apron and spreading his hands on the table in front of him.

"I just want this ribbon matched, please."

"Certainly, Mum. Won't your little boy—I beg pardon, the young gentleman, take a seat too? What colour did you want the ribbon, Mum?"

"The same colour as this," I said. "Idiot."

"Your grandfather is in a bit of a draught, I'm afraid, Mum. It always stimulates the flow of language. My grandfather was just the same. I'm afraid, Mum, we haven't any ribbon as you might say the same colour as this."

"If it's very near it will do."

"Now what colour would you call that?" wondered Archie, with his head on one side. "Kind of puce-like, I

should put it at. Puce-magenta, as we say in the trade. No; we're right out of puce-magenta."

"Show the lady what you have got," I said sternly.

"Well, Mum, I'm right out of ribbon altogether. The fact is I'm more of an ironmonger really. The draper's is just the other side of the road. You wouldn't like a garden roller now? I can do you a nice garden-roller for two pound five, and that's simply giving it away."

"Oh, shall we have a nice roller?" said Myra eagerly.

"I'm not going to carry it home," I said.

"That's all right, Sir. My little lad will take it up on his bicycle. Two pounds five, mum, and sixpence for the mouse-trap the gentleman's been sitting on. Say three pounds."

Myra took out her purse.

Second Scene.

We were back in our ordinary clothes.

"I wonder if they guessed that," said Archie.

"It was very easy," said Myra. "I should have thought they'd have seen it at once."

"But of course they're not a very clever lot," I explained. "That fellow with the spectacles—"

"Simpson, his name is," said Archie. "I know him well. He's a wonderful golfer."

"Well, he looks learned enough. I expect he knows all right. But the others—"

"Do you think he knew that we were supposed to be in a shop?"

"Surely! Why, I should think even—What's that man's name over there? No; that one next to the pretty lady—ah, yes, Thomas. Is that Thomas, the wonderful cueist, by the way? Really! Well, I should think even Thomas guessed that much."

"Don't you think perhaps we'd better do it over again to make sure?"

"Oh, no, it was perfectly obvious. Let's get on to the final scene."

"I'm afraid that will give it away rather," said Myra.

"I'm afraid so," agreed Archie.

"It always seems to me rather silly to do the whole word—it makes it so easy. But I suppose we'd better."

Third Scene.

We sat on camp-stools and looked up at the ceiling with our mouths open.

"E's late," said Archie.

"I don't believe 'e's coming, and I don't mind 'oo 'ears me sye so," said Myra. "So there."

"Ot work," I said, wiping my brow.

"Nar, not up there. Not 'ot. Nice and breezy like."

"But 'e's nearer the sun than wot we are, ain't 'e?"

"Ah, but 'e's not 'ot. Not up there."

"'Ere, there 'e is," cried Myra jumping up excitedly. "Over there. 'Ow naow, it's a bird. I declare I quite thought it was 'im. Silly of me."

There was silence for a little, and then Archie took a sandwich out of his pocket.

"Wunner wot they'll invent next," he said, and munched stolidly.

* * * * *

"Well done," said Dahlia.

"Thomas and I have been trying to guess," said Simpson, "but the strain is terrific. My first idea was 'codfish,' but I suppose that's wrong. It's either 'silkworm' or 'wardrobe.' Thomas's suggestions have been 'submarine,' 'chimney' and 'mangel-wurzel.' He says he never saw anybody who had so much the whole air of a wurzel as Archie. The indefinable *elan* of the wurzel was there."

"Can't you really guess?" said Myra eagerly. "I don't know whether I want you to or not. Oh no, I don't want you to."

"Then I withdraw 'mangel-wurzel,'" said Simpson gallantly.

"I think I can guess," said Blair. "It's—"

"Whisper it," said Simpson. "I'm never going to know."

Blair whispered it.

"Yes," said Myra disappointedly, "that's it." A. A. M.

THE TRIALS OF A WOMAN OF GENIUS.

IV.

Sunday.—Another perturbing day. Peter was detained in town on Saturday and only got home just before dinner. It was a curious meal. Miss Stoker, after talking and playing music all the afternoon with me, suddenly developed into a full-blown Philistine, and the conversation at dinner took the form of a duologue between her and Peter on golf and county cricket, on both of which subjects she seems to be an enthusiast and an expert. If it had been base-ball, which I believe is the American game, I could have understood it better, but whenever I tried to get her to talk about her native country she was uncommunicative and evasive. At last I couldn't help saying, "I'm afraid you're not a very loyal American," on which Peter calmly said, "No wonder, considering she's never been in the States." "Oh, Peter," exclaimed Miss Stoker, "you needn't have given me away so soon."

Then of course it all had to come out. Miss Miriam Stoker is the *alias*



Mr. Punch's attention having been called to the above enticing notices displayed in some of our leading stores, he would like to point out the close similarity of conditions in the interior of the said stores at sale time and



IN THE GALLERIES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

of Peter's cousin, Margaret Vivian, the female Admirable Crichton, of whom I had heard so much in former years, but had never seen her. She played cricket better than her brothers, went up to Girton with a scholarship, took a first in History, and then went off to Germany to study music. But why was it necessary to introduce her to me in the guise of an American authoress and under an assumed name? I hate practical jokes, and this seems to me one of the most unnecessary hoaxes I ever heard of. However, Peter made a clean breast of it after his cousin had gone to bed. He is trying in many ways, but at least no one can accuse him of a lack of candour, and on this occasion he quite surpassed himself.

"My dear Delicia," he began, "you are an attractive and engaging young person, and I don't in the least regret having married you. You have good looks, style and intelligence. But since the fatal day when that blithering fellow in *The Magnet* told you that you had creative genius and that it was your duty to cultivate the divine impulse you have threatened to develop into a prig and a bore. Your verses are passable, but I have calculated that they cost me exactly 5s. a line."

I reminded Peter with dignity that MILTON only received £5 for *Paradise Lost*, but he was ungenerous enough to retort that at least MILTON was not out of pocket on the transaction. He then went on to disparage my music and to criticise my theories of education, and wound up by saying: "The fact is you're not a woman of genius, otherwise I should never have dared to marry you. You're something much better, if you only would leave your mind alone. And the only way I could devise of converting you to my mode of thinking was to bring you up against the genuine article and let you see the difference. If I had asked Margaret here in the ordinary way you would have paid no attention to her. So I induced her to come as an admirer of your poetry, and just let things work themselves out. The result, so far as I can gather, has been excellent. You admit that you can't compete with Margaret, and the admission does credit to your sanity, as she is an invincible person."

Thus ended the longest speech I ever heard Peter make. I was inexpressibly wounded by his tone, but the worst of all was that most of what he said was true. So with an immense effort of self-restraint I said nothing. Visions of the dénouement of *The Doll's House* floated through my brain in the night, but next day it was Margaret who reconciled me to Peter's view.

My music I had already abandoned, but there remained my poetry. Yet when I asked her candid opinion of my sonnets she had no difficulty in proving by chapter and verse that they were three parts derivative. When I asked her in despair what consolation was left me, she fairly exploded: "Consolation! Why, you've got a delightful house, an indulgent husband and an adorable child. What more do you want?"

Margaret goes to-morrow, but she has promised to come again and give me lessons in counterpoint and golf. She says that the first regulates the emotions and the second is a cure for introspection. Anyhow, I mean to give her system a trial.

SHEP FOR ENGLAND.

IN A TERRITORIAL CAMP.

My land, and ye who therein dwell
From coast to guarded coast,
Far be 't from me my toils to tell,
And farther still to boast;

But here from out these broiling tents
And a most droughty throat
I hope I may, at all events,
Just call on you to note

That, though my work be little worth,
My foot no longer fleet,
And one of—well, of generous girth
Does sorely feel the heat;

Despite this 80 in the shade,
At duty's call have I
Forsworn my flannel'd ease and laid
The airy blazer by.

I've belted there and strapped on here
This whole confounded kit,
This swathing, creaking mass of gear—
Phew! but just think of it!

Hark ye in sheltered homes, I've lost
More than mere blood this day;
But what know ye of fighting's cost
Who think but of the fray?

England, I have not bled for thee,
Though with all fervour fired;
That may or, haply, may not be,
But, oh! I have perspired!

"James Valentine was the first English pilot to arrive . . . By this time, 8.30 a.m., the whole frame of this part of the Harrogate Stray was black with faces."—*Yorkshire Evening Post*.

"Black"! And Harrogate's bathing facilities and far-famed waters meet us at every turn.

"Tarrant l.b.w., b. Tarrant, 168."—*Globe*.

These long innings must be ended somehow, however desperate the means.

"A FRIEND."

I MET Reginald by chance in Jermyn Street and, accepting the invitation which he omitted to offer me, accompanied him up to his rooms.

I was soon to regret my good nature, however, for Reginald was in a state of the deepest dejection.

"Reginald," I said—in lighter mood I call him Reggie, but I saw at once that this was not a Reggie day—"Reginald, you are off colour. What is the nature of your trouble? Financial, physical, or social?"

I know Reginald's worldly ambitions and was not surprised therefore that at the last word he winced painfully, and pointed to a pile of weekly illustrated papers.

I snatched them up one after the other, and hastily scanned their pages, fearing I knew not what.

"I can't find anything," I said at length, "unless it's these portraits of you at various race-meetings. I don't say you look extraordinarily handsome in any—" But he cut me short.

"Don't you see, you ass?" he said. "Read the writing. 'The Hon. Craven Coward in the Enclosure with a friend!' 'General Waitingroom talking with a friend!' 'Sir Tiddley and Lady Winks and a friend.' That's what makes me so wild. Why must I always be 'a friend'? Why can't they say who I am? Ain't I as good as the Winkses? Or old Waitingroom? But I've got them this time," he went on, cooling down a little. "When I was at Godwood I managed to get taken *absolutely alone*."

At that moment his man came in with the new *Twaddler*, hot from the press.

I looked over Reginald's shoulder as he turned the pages with trembling hands.

There he was, alone, as he had said, and wearing the self-satisfied smirk which said plainly enough: "Now you can withhold my rights no longer." Plainly enough to me, that is; for the photographer had unfortunately failed to interpret it correctly, and below was the legend:

"*Evidently a backer of Braxted.*"

Reginald flung down the paper and kicked a footstool savagely, and I decided it would be more tactful to leave him with his trouble.

At the door curiosity overcame discretion, however.

"Did you back Braxted?" I asked.

A copy of *The Turf Guide* struck the lintel a quarter of an inch above my head, and I closed the door hastily.

Evidently he had not.



New Stable Lad. "THAT 'UN AIN'T 'ARDLY SAFE. I WONDER YOU KEEPS 'IM!"

Master. "BEST 'OSS WE'VE GOT; FIND 'IS WAY 'OME ALONE FROM ANYWHERE, 'E WILL. LIKE A DOG."

MUSIC AND MURDER.

[Suggested by a recent appreciation of "Scheherazade" by "R.C." in *The Daily Mail*.]

"ANOTHER prodigious success was achieved on Saturday night by the Circassian dancers at Covent Garden. Nothing more beautiful—nothing so beautiful, one may boldly assert—can ever have been seen on any stage since the world began. 'Mirza Schaffy' is the name of this soul-shaking ballet, in which all the splendours of the Georgian imagination are condensed in one short hour of delirious ecstasy. The scene, which is laid in the palace of Semangellina, the Empress of Tiflis, is a stupendous harmony of opalescent hues, and the action passes on the roof garden of a Caucasian Temple, honey-combed with oubliettes. Semangellina, who is in love with her Prime Minister, Prince Mirza Schaffy, resolves to test his devotion by ordering all the members of his family to immolate themselves by jumping down the oubliettes to slow music. When some of them refuse, the Empress summons her janis-

saries to execute the recalcitrants, and an appalling scene of carnage and horror ensues. Gigantic soldiers with enormous scimitars slay right and left, heads are mown off by scores, and the shrieks of the decapitated victims are echoed in the highest registers of the piccolos and oboes. The enormous effect of the scene proves to absolute demonstration that the ballet is to be ranked with the highest emanations of any other art, glyptic, pictorial or dramatic. But the chief æsthetic significance of the spectacle is to be found in the marvellous persuasiveness of the orchestra. An ancient poet taught us that music has power to soothe the savage breast. It has been reserved for the genius of Bobolinsky-Kluchnikoff to prove that the most repulsive and nauseating savagery can be rendered not only endurable but fascinating when associated with refined and sparkling orchestration. It is devoutly to be hoped that this novel and exhilarating illustration of the influence of music will not be overlooked by our native

composers in their quest for unexploited sensations. Music has too long been concerned with the glorification of insipidity. In future it will be its noble task to reconcile us to the delights of carnage and to lend a fresh savour to the extravagance of hæmatomania."

After describing Mr. BALFOUR's rebuke to the HOME SECRETARY on the famous night of the uproar in the House, the *Scotsman* says: "Mr. Churchill winced in silence." This from a serious Scotch paper!

"It is understood that the marriage between Earl Percy and Lady Helen Gordon-Lennox will be celebrated shortly after the 14th October, the closing day of the Spey rod fishing."

Aberdeen Journal.

Duty first!

"GARDINER.—On the 7th July, at White-thorn, Barton-road, Cambridge, the wife of Professor I. Stanley Gardiner, F.R.S. (*née Dr. Edith Willcock*), of a daughter."—*Standard*.

As we have always said of the lady doctor, *nascitur non fit*.



French Examiner (consulting list of candid des for linguistic honours). "QUEL EST VOTRE NUMÉRO?"
Cudet. "ER—MY NAME ISN'T KELLY, IT'S DICKSON!"

HINTS TO TRAVELLERS.

IF you must be a traveller, be a *bonâ-fide* traveller. It will come in useful, you will find, on thirsty Sundays.

All roads lead to Rome. This, however, does not apply to railroads. Margate, therefore, is still open for consideration as a possible holiday resort.

Margate is not the only Queen of Watering Places. There are two hundred and thirty-one other queens. If you cannot make up your mind as to which you prefer, leave it to the Booking Clerk. He will submit a list of names and, while you are thinking the matter out, the people behind you will keep up the flow of conversation.

Having sufficiently stirred the Booking Clerk from his state of apathy, turn your attention to the porters. But wariness is essential with these, as they are not kept in cages.

When you have selected your carriage and sat in it, no one else has a right to get in without your permission. Let your expression of greeting to intruders leave no doubt as to this.

It is your prerogative to have a carriage to yourself. Though you cannot sit in ten seats at once, the fact of

other people sitting in them is an insult to you and to be resented as such.

The safest place in the carriage, in case of accidents, is on the rack. This is provided primarily for light articles. You may be light, but cannot, unless I am mistaken in you, be an article. For the convenience of the Company and your own comfort, it is advisable only to resort to the rack when there is going to be an accident.

If a fellow-passenger starts offering you papers, you might as well accept the first and save yourself trouble. He will make you read something before he has done with you.

Avoid friendships with guards. They cost a shilling a time. Also, any communications you desire to make to the driver should not be made by cord. This is even more expensive.

Do not throw bottles out on to the line. Keep them, during your journey, in the pockets in which you habitually carry them.

I once had the privilege of travelling in the same carriage with a honeymoon couple of the working class. With his left hand the bridegroom held the right hand of the bride. With his right he held the humorous paper he was reading at the time. His idea was, I

think, to combine business and pleasure.

When you go on your honeymoon, you will have not only to travel first-class, but also to buy two first-class tickets for the purpose. Knowing you as I do, I shall be heartily amused if a third-class ticket-holder insists on travelling in your carriage.

The worst part of quarrelling with a railway company is the feeling that the Company is never upset about it. I have written to my own pet company no fewer than five times to tell it that I am surprised at it, and still it goes on.

Return tickets are available for six months, a fact to be pointed out, with significant emphasis, to your hostess on arrival.

"Jones made his 103 out of 165 in ninety-five minutes, and did not give a chance. He hit one 66 and 13 4's."—*Evening News*.

The stroke which produced 66 was one of the most remarkable ever seen. It was not exactly a drive and not exactly a cut, but it did the fieldsmen's business.

"Mr. J. B. Hammond, millionaire inventor of the typewriter, who is 73 years of age, has left New York on a twenty-seven years' cruise."—*Manchester Evening News*.

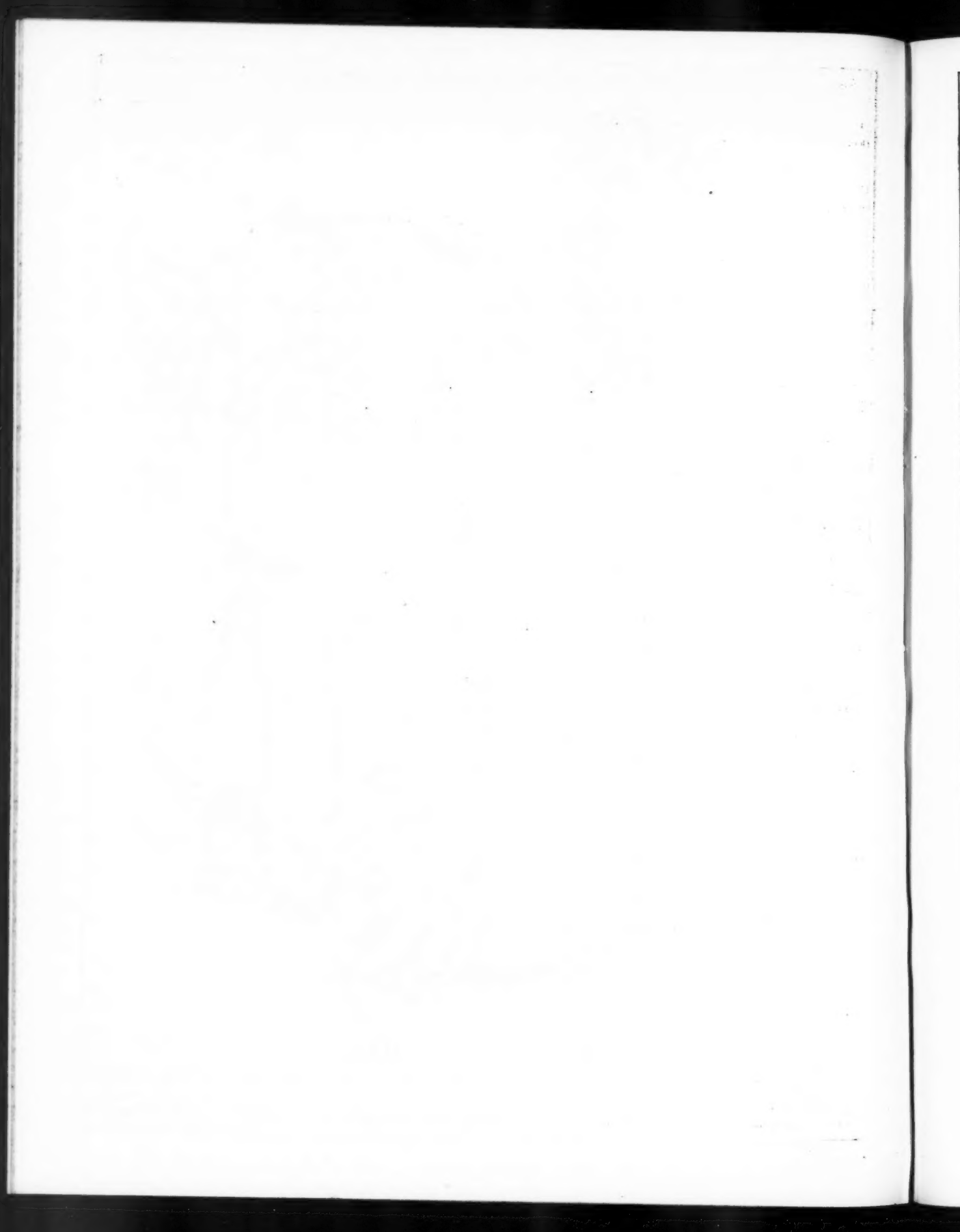
We shall look out for his account of it in *The Daily Mail*.



THE OLD TROJAN.

LORD LANSDOWNE, "DON'T LUG THAT INFERNAL MACHINE INTO THE CITADEL. THE THING'S FULL OF ENEMIES."

LORD HALSBURY, "I KNOW. THAT'S WHERE MY HEROISM COMES IN."



ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

(EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.)

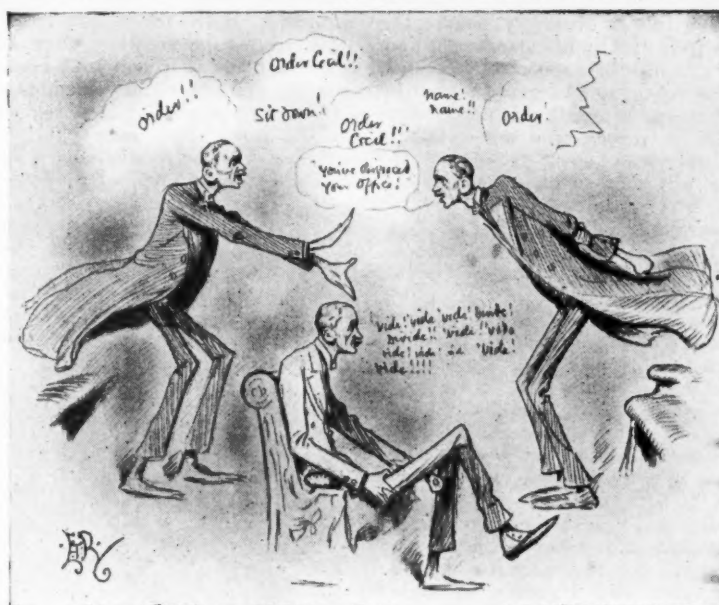
House of Commons, Monday, July 24.

—Since the free fight on floor of House that disgraced the Session of 1893, nothing has equalled the tumult that filled the Chamber this afternoon. Nearest approach was when Liberals expelled PRINCE ARTHUR, then Premier, personally to define his views on current stage of Tariff Reform question and with modesty habitually predominant in connection with this question he put up ALFRED LYTTLETON in his place. A mere squib compared with to-night's explosion.

That the outbreak was organised was obvious, is indeed not denied. Questions disposed of, Clerk read out First Order of Day. "Parliament Bill: Consideration of Lords' Amendments. PREMIER rose amid storm of cheering from his supporters. Taking up sheet of manuscript, placed on brass-bound box as he entered, he smoothed it out and, the cheers subsiding, began his speech. Instantly uprose from group behind Front Opposition Bench, on which PRINCE ARTHUR lolled with languorous air, cries of "Traitor! Traitor!" Shout taken up from front benches below Gangway. COUSIN HUGH in corner seat, pale to the lips, with blazing eyes and frail form shaken by tempestuous passion, led the rally. In vain the SPEAKER, who from first to last preserved unruffled mien, a dignified contrast to the turmoil on both sides, made earnest appeal for preservation of order.

It proved unavailing. WILL CROOKS rose to deliver brief lesson in deportment. Though he was highly qualified for mission, Opposition would have none of him. In locality where the waters come down from Lodore, WILLIAM'S voice might perhaps have been heard. Effort hopeless amid present din. McCULLAM SCOTT, endeavouring to take a hand, was literally bawled down. CHIOZZA MONEY flung himself on the counter (so to speak) to prove his genuineness. "A bad shilling!" shrieked a voice below Gangway opposite, and MONEY was contemptuously chucked back. SPEAKER'S attention called to ARCHER-SHEE, but in the uproar no consequences followed.

HUNT popped up and down like a parched pea in a frying-pan yelling, "Point of Order." EDWARD



THE CASTE OF "VIDE DI VIDE."

(A study of Lord HUGH CECIL *beside himself*.)

"Indeed I heard one bitter word
That scarce is fit for you to hear;
Her manners had not that repose
Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere."—*Tennyson.*

CARSON moved adjournment of debate. SPEAKER, ready at every turn, pointed out that debate had not yet been opened. F. E. SMITH waved both arms in eloquent though inaudible argument. All the while in corner seat below Gangway sat Cousin HUGH, like the bird of evil omen perched on the bust of Pallas above the chamber door, forlornly croaking, "Vide, 'vide, 'vide."

Through it all the PREMIER stood by brass-bound box, getting in a sentence here and there in comparative lull in uproar. Proceedings, save in the matter of harmony, were something in way of an oratorio. A line was sung solo by the PREMIER. Then broke in the roar of chorus, with the voice of HUNT accompanying it in the part of the big bassoon. The tenor got off another bar of his solo, and the chorus almost literally swept him off his legs with roar of execration.

Most striking part of performance was that PREMIER absolutely ignored interruptions. Not that they failed in point. COUSIN HUGH varied his plaintive monody by remarking, "You have broken the Constitution." Later he contributed to amenities of occasion remark addressed to LEADER OF HOUSE, "You are absolutely unworthy of your position."

PREMIER took no more notice of him than if he were a fly settled on somebody else's nose. Went on whenever he found a chance, preserving strict sequence of his type-written sentences. For full forty minutes the struggle lasted—a hundred men against



"GENTLEMEN *v.* THE REST OF ENGLAND."

(A fixture which we trust will not be repeated.)

"Through it all the Premier stood by brass-bound box."

one. At last, with angry gesture, the PREMIER rolled up his manuscript and, facing round to his supporters, protested, "I am not going to degrade myself by further endeavouring to press arguments on people who are evidently resolved not to listen."

A fresh burst of cheering followed, Ministerialists leaping to their feet and waving hats and handkerchiefs.

"The question is," said the SPEAKER, "that the Lords' Amendments be now considered."

Promptly PRINCE ARTHUR rose, greeted by hearty cheers from excited throng to left of Chair. In ordinary familiar course of events row would have been the turn of the Ministerialists. Their chieftain had been howled down. In accordance with old practice they would give LEADER OF OPPOSITION a turn.

There came into operation pretty little action illustrative of the chivalry native to the House in its maddest moments. The PREMIER, foreseeing what would happen when PRINCE ARTHUR took the floor, had privily despatched the MASTER OF ELIBANK with injunction to his men to refrain from reprisals. For some minutes ELIBANK was seen fluttering round, dove-like, with olive leaf in his beak. Effect marvellous. PRINCE ARTHUR was listened to in silence, an unexpected reception he gratefully acknowledged.

But there were limits to so bearance. When F. E. SMITH proposed to follow, storm broke forth again, not subsiding till, at the end of five minutes, he gave in and resumed his seat, having uttered no other audible phrase than "Mr. Speaker—"

Proceedings brought to abrupt end. The SPEAKER, acting under new Standing Order provided to meet cases of grave disorder, adjourned the House without Question put.

"Familiar with the petition, 'Save me from my friends,'" said SARK as we walked off together, "one might be inclined in cases such as this to cry aloud, 'Commend me to my enemies.' If the young lions in the Opposition den had been suborned by ASQUITH to get up this afternoon's performance they could not have more effectively earned their wage. It will not only strengthen the bonds between himself and his followers in the House and through the country, it will grievously damage the already stricken cause of the Peers. If these be the champions of that venerable institution, these the exponents of the principle of Law and Order, that shrewd person the Man in the Street will be inclined to say he is not taking any."

Business done.—None.

Tuesday.—Seemed when SPEAKER took Chair this afternoon that House, naturally shamefaced in remembrance of yesterday's proceedings, had relapsed into old humdrum manner. Benches only half filled. Questions on paper devoid of interest. Appearances however not for first time illusory. BIRRELL, rattling through answer of one of string of Irish questions, was suddenly interrupted by ringing cheer that rose and swelled with gathering force. Turning sharply round he perceived PREMIER entering from behind the SPEAKER'S Chair.



DON'T KEIR HARDIE and the latest Socialist modes for Merthyr Tydfil.

Possibly Ministerialists might have been satisfied with this significant welcome had it not been for COUSIN HUGH. PRIME MINISTER sharply retorted to enquiry of RUPERT GWYNNE, "I refuse to answer insolent questions." This naturally shocked COUSIN HUGH's severe idea of decencies of debate. Rising to call the SPEAKER'S attention to the bad language he was greeted by howl of execration from benches opposite. For some minutes he stood facing the music. When he attempted to speak there broke forth the cry which he himself yesterday employed to discomfiture of PRIME MINISTER.

"May I ask—" he shouted.

"Vide, 'vide, 'vide!" roared the Ministerialists.

In a rough-and-tumble scrimmage COUSIN HUGH does not seem to promise

much. But his courage is indomitable. Thrice he interposed, calling down upon his head a fresh storm of angry interruption. Incidentally BIRRELL continued to read out answers to the questions addressed to him on the paper. COUSIN HUGH rising to give voice to a fresh thought personal to the PREMIER, uproar broke out again and the CHIEF SECRETARY was fain to stand silent at the Table.

A more genial episode was appearance on scene of DON'T KEIR HARDIE. Either by happy accident or by acute prevision he had for this occasion possessed himself of a reach-me-down suit of white flannels, a touch of many colours being added by a gorgeous cummerbund. Whilst the row was in progress he, after manner of limited supply of supers on transpontine stage, trotted in and out. However high angry passion might have risen, as soon as Members caught sight of the white suit and the coy cummerbund, they burst into hilarious shout of laughter and ironical cheering.

Then COUSIN HUGH took another turn. A wild roar greeted him. It seemed as if we were coming to fist-cuffs as in 1893, when from under the glass door leading from the Lobby there flashed a gleam of white with indication of a streak of rainbow. It was DON'T KEIR HARDIE and his cummerbund back again. Once more angry passion changed to burst of genuine merriment. In the end the SPEAKER put down COUSIN HUGH with sharp reproof and, the House getting into Committee of Supply, the excited multitude broke up and disappeared.

Business done.—India Budget expounded by UNDER-SECRETARY. Result wholesomely soporific.

Scandal at a Watering-place.

"MALVERN.—Furnished Residence; large lounge hall, three reception, eight bed rooms; beautiful grounds and charming, retired situation; cook and husband could be left."

The Birmingham Daily Post.

We are interested to know whether it is the lady of the house or her husband who is responsible for the above advertisement.

"Rain began to fall heavily at two o'clock, with the result that the garden party at Holyrood Palace in all probability will be cancelled. Betting—6 to 4 on Toggery."

Edinburgh Evening Dispatch.

We should hardly estimate Toggery's chances so highly in such weather.

"George Duncan, of the Hangerhill Club, London, will make an eight weeks' tour in America during September."—*The Courier.*

Desperate time-savers these Hangerhill champions.



Mike (to alarm as it goes off). "I FOOLED YEZ THAT TIME. I WAS NOT ASLAPE AT ALL."

A GLOSSARY OF POLITICAL TERMS.

(For Use in a Crisis.)

LAST DITCH.—A receptacle for poor thinking and high falutin. Favourite death-place for advanced politicians who do not intend to die—at least, not there—and who, as a matter of fact, always survive misfortunes which have made strange ditch-fellows.

NO SURRENDER.—An expression much used by those who attempt to disguise a defeat by congratulating one another on their indomitable courage and to reveal their love for their leader by disregarding his advice and attempting to shatter his authority. After which they surrender with the rest.

CECIL.—(1) A place where Dukes and Smiths combine to banquet a former creator of judges who is not to be satisfied without a creation of Peers.

(2) A gentleman from Oxford University, noted for the amenity of his manners and the suavity of his language. An expert in the organisation of impromptu anger. Holding that silence is golden, he has shrieked down a Prime Minister and reduced a Speaker to impotence. Conscious, as he is, of his merits, he esteems lightly and denounces shrilly those who fail to share his exalted estimate of his own immaculate perfection.

CAD.—Term supposed by those who bravely use it under cover of uproar to be vividly descriptive of an English gentleman who happens to be Prime Minister.

TRAITOR.—A genial word conveying political disagreement. Has been howled out by many whose language (like the raven's answer) "little meaning, little relevancy, bore."

THE HOUSE OF LORDS.—(1) The last rampart of British liberty. (2) An effete assembly of arrogant people-crushers combined together for the destruction of freedom and capable of being checked and cured only by the duplication of their number.

"It was a red herring," said the Borough Councillor, "and now it has come home to roost."

ANOTHER BOOK THAT HAS HELPED.

WHEN editors my proffered poems scorn
(Always, of course, regretfully polite),
And lack of luck is moving me to mourn
The homing instincts of the things I write,
'Tis then that in my agony I look
For consolation to my favourite book.

KEATS cannot cure my tendency to mope,
Nor SHELLEY dissipate my anxious frown;
I cannot find resuscitated hope
In either of the Swans of Stratford town;
Nor is the volume BUNYARD's goodly tome
Of ballads (with the H's "not at home").

No! It is lettered in a golden tint
"The Works of Self," and folio number one
Displays my verses which appeared in print
Last summer in *The Little Sableigh Sun*,
I note the cultured rhyme, the sparkling-wit
Embodied in that jocund little fyte.

And once again I laugh at Fortune's kicks,
Once more I feel assured that now and then
My verse may yet be privileged to mix
With snappy pars about the Upper Ten;
And so return the volume to its shelf
With renovated confidence in Self.

Britain on the Qui Vive.

"3. Paragraph 56A. In line 2 after 'Sunday' for 'rice' and in line 3 after 'Thursday' for 'sago' substitute 'blanc-mange' in each case."
Army Orders.

"In the story of 'Making the Crew' which follows, there are recited the experiences of many a college oarsman who has been famous at his alma water."—*Montreal Standard.*

What has ALMA TADEMA to say to this?

BLANCHE'S LETTERS.

A BACKWARD GLANCE.

Park Lane.

DEAREST DAPHNE,—Among the tragediettas of the season now in *extremis* has been the social suicide of Mrs. Jimmy Sharpe. She's been in a long time, but she's out again now, and may knock and ring for the rest of her life without finding anyone to open the door.

She was a good bit of an outsider when the Flummerys first met her somewhere abroad, conceived a violent fancy for her, after their fashion, and took her up. Once taken up, she did the rest herself, and in a short time one met her everywhere that was anywhere. She got a big reputation as a *funny* woman and teller of *risqué* stories, and was in great request at dinners and suppers and country-house parties. I never thought her particularly witty—and Ray Rimington, who's by way of being a *bel esprit* himself, says in his opinion a woman has no more business to be a wit than to have a beard or a deep voice! However that may be, Mrs. Jimmy, finding lately that her wit was petering out and her stock of *risqué* stories was running low (Norty says they generally *did* run low!), has taken to practical joking (the *dernière ressource* of a played-out wit), and has now made her last joke, practical or otherwise, in our world.

This was how it happened. This summer the Dunstables have had a series of week-end parties at their place near Richmond, Riverside Court. I never could stand the Dunstables. The two old people are *awful*, the girls are tombstones, and young Luton is a prig of the first magnitude. They belong to the set dubbed by *nous autres* The Deadly-Dulls—fearful creatures, among whom are current such phrases as “the duties of our station”—“the proper bringing-up of children”—“the pleasures of domestic life,” and so on—and the week-end parties at Riverside Court have been of the hopelessly stodgy sort described by that wonderful old mid-Victorian word, *respectable*. To one of these week-end parties, however, in order, I suppose, to leaven the lump of respectability a little, they invited Mrs. Jimmy Sharpe, it being understood, of course, that no *risqué* stories would be tolerated, that she was to be, as SHAKESPEARE says, as amusing as the serpent but as harmless as the dove. A few days before going she was at a little supper at the Gardenia Club and had a wager with Giddy Tremayne (he's a relative of the Dunstables and a shaking of the head among them), that she would disappoint the old

Duchess of six of her expected guests (whom she, Mrs. Jimmy, happened to have heard of as being in the same week-end party), six female leaders of the Deadly-Dulls—six pillars of propriety—six monuments of all the domestic virtues—and would do it by means of the following anonymous letter, drawn up at the supper table amid yells of laughter:—“A Friend counsels you not to go to Riverside Court this week-end. He will be there, and danger is in the air.”

The wager was for a cool thousand—even. The six letters were sent. On Saturday Mrs. Jimmy went to Riverside Court, and Giddy, with the privilege of relationship, went uninvited “to see fair.” Three of the six leaders of the Deadly-Dulls and pillars of propriety weighed in all right and seemed to have nothing on their minds, but at dinner the old Duchess said, “Influenza seems to be coming out of its season. Poor dear So-and-so and So-and-so” (naming two of the absent leaders of the D-D.'s) “write to excuse themselves on the score of terrible colds, and dear So-and-so” (naming the third absentee—I don't write their names, leaving you to guess them, my dearest) “has been suddenly summoned to Scotland by the illness of an aunt.” Mrs. Jimmy and Giddy, no doubt, exchanged eloquent looks across the table, and next day they were stupid enough to have a dispute about how the wager should be settled, *on the lawn*—a dispute overheard by *someone* in an arbour they hadn't noticed—and, hey presto! the fat was in the fire in no time, and now Mrs. Jimmy's outside for ever. She quite deserves it. A snake in the grass, hitting below the belt in that way, is a danger to us all.

All the maharajahs who came over to coronate were darlings (they made such lovely bits of colour at one's parties!), but the darlindest of them all was the Ghezam of Pondypore, who has become a great friend of mine. I simply love his grave, gentle, graceful way, with just a teeny-weeny *souçon* of the Bengal tiger somewhere in the offing. I talked to him about TAMERLANE, and the Rig Vedas, and the Koran, and Buddhism and Brahmanism and all that sort of thing, and I'm sure he was immensely astonished at my knowledge of his country. Josiah was as rude to him as he dared to be, and always spoke of him to me as “that darkie!”

When the dear Ghezam left London he sent me a red rose, and a card to say his “devotion will last as long as the rose shall bloom.” Not a very long time, that, you say. Don't be too sure, my dear! Each petal of the red rose is a ruby, the dewdrops on it are

diamonds, and the leaves are emeralds. Isn't he a love? Babs and the rest of them were perfectly *sick* with envy the first time I wore it (as a corsage ornament). He has invited me to Pondypore as his guest for the Durbar, and of course I'm going. “You're not going,” said Josiah yesterday. “I certainly *am* going,” I replied. “I've promised Balaji.” “Who's Balaji, pray?” he demanded, quite *glaring* at me. “Well, the Ghezam, then,” I said. “Now look here, Blanche,” he said, “I don't often put my foot down, but I put it down now. I won't have you cavorting about India with this darkie that you call the Ghezam. Mind! I won't!” “Your point of view is just as narrow and as wrong as it can be,” I told him calmly. “Why don't you try to think *imperially*? Can't you see what *profound* policy it is, how good for our Indian Empire, that we Englishwomen should have an influence for good over the native princes?” “Stuffannonsense!” he cried. (That's an expression I've never been able to break him of, and he pronounces it as spelt above.) “If you want to see the Durbar, you shall see it, but without any Ghezams. We'll go together.”

We shall see. I've not the least intention of disappointing the Ghezam.

Beryl Clarges has set a new fashion in head ornaments, which she says she'll make even more popular than ospreys. She has imported a lot of live humming-birds to match different gowns. A slender gold chain attaches them by one leg to a jewelled head-band, and they flutter about over the head in a simply sweet manner. Of course they don't live more than a few hours, but she has a fresh set for the next night. Those dreadful people of the Society for Interfering with Everybody are always after her, threatening proceedings, but Beryl's only answer to them is to add more humming-birds to her coiffure!

Dear Stella Clackmannan has been having Thursday *Thés Mélodiques* at Clackmannan House and has played and sung her own compositions to her friends (for their sins!) One Thursday Ninian follyott was among the crowd, and Stella gave us her new Song Cycle, *Ecstasies in Elfland*. Her little prize Pekingese was in his little beddy-bye in some corner and, just as Stella finished one of her *Ecstasies* (the dear thing's voice, *entre nous*, is quite past praying for!), little Pekingese gave a sudden, piercingly shrill little howl. “Brava!” cried Ninny follyott innocently. “That was a simply rippin' high note you finished up with, Duchess—best I ever heard you do!”

Oh, my dearest, just a little story about Sir Croesus Lucre. He came of age, you know, a year or two ago, and has undergone abso ute *torments*, poor boy, from being the *parti* of the moment. Lately he's sold off all his horses, his motors, and even his yacht, and has gone in entirely for flying, which he has taken up *avec fureur*. "You seem awfully stuck on 'planing, old boy," Norty said to him the other day. "I ain't stuck on it," was the rueful answer. "I loathe it—and it's spoilin' my digestion—but it's the only way of escape from—from—them, you know!"

Ever thine, BLANCHE.

THE DESERT OPTIMIST.

An exile, I would fain forget
That circumstance hath put me down
Quite close to places like Tibet,
But very far from London town.

And though the outlook's rather drear
I sometimes fancy I detect
A sort of Cockney atmosphere,
A Metropolitan effect.

Behind my chair in solemn state
The bearer and khansama stand,
Swart replicas of those who wait
In Piccadilly or the Strand.

My pankah brings a grateful wind
To cheeks climatically brown'd,
A fitful gust that calls to mind
The draughts about the Underground.

And though they spoil my morning rest
I like to lie awake and hark
To parakeets whose notes suggest
Their captive kin in Regent's Park.

About my house the pigeons roost,
They perch upon the compound walls,
Own brothers to the friends who used
To flap me greeting from St. Paul's.

In yellow waves the dawn-mist drives
Across the paddy-field and jogs
The memory of one who strives
To reconstruct his London fogs.

And when I hear a bullock-cart
Go rumbling 'neath its harvest truss
The echo wakens in my heart
The music of the omnibus.

And thus it is I've learned to find
A remedy for things that irk;
My desert fades and with a kind
Of cinematographic jerk—

"Urbs errat ante oculos ;"
Then, Fortune, send me where you list,
I care not, London holds me close,
An exile, yet an optimist.

"Concert party want funny comic singer for winter," &c.—*Evening News*.
So do we all.



Perspiring Customer. "PH-H-H! BRING ME SOMETHING COOL."

Waitress. "YES, SIR. WOULD YOU LIKE AN ICE?"

Perspiring Customer. "NO, NO; SOMETHING COOLER THAN THAT."

A PILLAR OF SOCIETY.

I MET him in the Tube. The movement of the train rolled us together and his bag of tools hit me. He damned the line, apologised to me, and we began to talk.

In response to my question he said he was full of work. Couldn't complain.

"Yes," he amplified, "we're wonderful busy this year. It's a record, that's what it is. First the Coronation; then the heat; and now all these strengthening jobs—fortifying, or whatever you call it."

"Fortifying?" I inquired.

"Yes," he replied. "Buttressing walls and all that sort of thing. We're being sent for all over the place to do that. Sometimes it's a ceiling that's given way; sometimes a floor with a hole in it; but often enough it's the very house. In Kensington chiefly, and Bayswater; but other parts, too. We're at it all the time. It's a nepidemic, that's what it is."

"But," I said, "surely this is very odd. I can understand measles and influenza and things like that being

epidemic; but how can houses in different parts of London all begin suddenly to go wrong at the same time? That's surely very puzzling. What is your theory?"

"Well," he said, "I don't know much about these things, but they tell me it's Nijinsky."

"Nijinsky?"

"Yes, the Russian Dancer at Coving Garden. He's that nippy, they tell me, there was never anything like it. He jumps into the air, they tell me, and doesn't come down for a couple of blooming minutes. And all these Kensington and Bayswater people are trying to do the same. That's what I understand it is. I'm told that on still nights you can hear 'em crashing about in all directions. Dessay he comes down a bit lighter. But of course I haven't seen this Nijinsky myself. It's not in my line exactly. The O'GORMAN Brothers is what I fancy—good step-dancers with double heels. All the same, 'Long life to Nijinsky' is what I says. It's good enough for me to mend the damage he causes. That's where me and my mates come in! Good night."

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

ON the outside wrapper of *The Gift of the Gods* (HEINEMANN) the publishers have been at pains to inform me in large print that it is a NEW novel by the author of *On the Face of the Waters*. Well, speaking personally, and as a reader to whom the previous work and the literary reputation of Mrs. FLORA ANNIE STEEL are things of moment, I should call the present volume not only a new novel, but a new and disconcerting experiment in style on the part of a writer from whom something very different is justly expected. I may be to blame, but certainly I myself could find in this ordinary and not very interesting tale of some dull people in the Outer Hebrides no trace of that distinction and charm for which Mrs. STEEL has before this made me her very grateful debtor. When, moreover, what I did find was such a phrase as, "the woman who he had widowed," or "the stepping out of a new face," things repugnant to the ordinary decencies of proof reading, I felt that some expostulation was called for. The story itself is of one Margaret Macdonald, a widow whose husband, the laird of Westray, in the Islands, meets his death early in the book after a mysterious fashion that is never properly cleared up. Macdonald went over the cliff, one foggy night, to rescue the victims of a supposed wreck, and was never seen again; while the stranger whom the helpers pulled up at the end of the laird's rope lived on at Westray to become Margaret's lover and the hero of as much tale as the book contains. Its only real attraction lies in its portrayal of village life in these unfamiliar parts; there is atmosphere here, but not enough else to save Mrs. STEEL's admirers from a sad disappointment.

Master Christopher (SMITH, ELDER)—you can see the old nurse in the background—is what lady society-journalists would call a "boy and girl" party. The too-old-at-forty characters in it count about as much as they do in an up-to-date newspaper office or a fashionable ball-room. And, as I always love Mrs. HENRY DE LA PASTURE's mother-heroines, I feel a little aggrieved that in this book she kills off the one really charming specimen before the story proper begins. But the young people play quite a pretty comedy of love (with, in one case, a pathetic ending) in the fine old house which Christopher's plebeian father had bought with trade-won gold from its ancestral owner when he joined the other pigeons that flutter round the Stock Exchange. Christopher himself you will find a bit of a boor, but a good sort for all that; and his young sister, in a dove-like kind of way, is as lovable as I imagine their dead mother must have been. The exciting element in this little drama of

English country life is provided by his cousin, a flashy beauty from West Kensington, whose hard eyes had marked him as her legitimate prey. Both she and her fat and flabby mother are drawn with particular skill. I cannot say that the story grips me so much, for instance, as *Peter's Mother*. My pulse did not gallop nor my heart throb as I read it. But I liked it because the people in it are real and talk the language of life and not of fiction.

What gave me some added interest to *The Sovereign Power* (MACMILLAN) was the thought that, a few years ago, it would have been regarded as a romance of the fantastically impossible type. JULES VERNE might have written it then, for boys to delight in; or, a little later and with rather more *finesse*, our own H. G. WELLS might have imagined the concluding chapters. Briefly, it is a novel of aviation that Mr. MARK LEE LUTHER has composed, in a

brisk and entertaining style, uncomplicated by subtlety of any kind. The author has been content to rely for novelty upon the strange, half-understood machines that play a large part in the working out of his plot; his characters, it must be confessed, are anything but original. The American heiress, the exiled Prince, and the aged diplomat with the secrets of half the chancelleries of Europe at his withered finger-ends, are all of them puppets upon whom the dust of generations has begun to settle. However, flight in an aeroplane soon disperses this; and nothing could well be more thrilling, or, to all appearances, more realistic (I speak as a groundling) than the description of Ann's abduction by Prince

Rodoslav in one monoplane, and their pursuit and overhauling by her republican lover in another. That tells you the kind of book it is. The fact that it is both written and illustrated in America will prepare you for some unfamiliar grammar and several charming pictures of the nice-looking people whom they seem to draw so well over there. But I think author and artist might have agreed about the heroine's hotel in Venice; when one called it the Victoria it worried me a little to find the other depicting the lady as drinking in the view from the Danieli.

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